

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
INRE-00 SSO-00 /055 W
-----056951 151542Z /46

O P 151302Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5429
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HGTS CZ
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LA APZ PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MONTEVIDEO 5700

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, MILI, UY
SUBJ: CHAPTER TWO OF THE MCAULIFFE SAGA

USIA FOR ILA, IOP/M

REF: MONTEVIDEO 5688, (DTG 132100Z DEC 77)

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1. SUMMARY. PRO-GOVERNMENT PRESS CONTINUED THE
ATTACK ON MCAULOFFE IN A SERIES OF DISTORTED AND MIS-
LEADING REPORTS. ONLY THE INDEPENDENT DAILY EL DIA
GAVE OBJECTIVE COVERAGE. I TOLD BOTH THE FOREIGN
MINISTER AND THE DEFENSE MINISTER THAT THE GOU
SHOULD CLARIFY THE STORY BY PUBLISHING MCAULIFFE'S
LUNCHEON TOAST BECAUSE OFFICIAL SOURCES ARE QUOTED.
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THE DEFENSE MINISTER PROMISED TO REPORT BACK TO ME
AFTER CONFERRING WITH THE CINCS. SUBSEQUENTLY, TO OF THE THREE
CINCS ISSUED CLARIFICATIONS. END SUMMARY
END CONFIDENTIAL

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2. MONTEVIDEO'S THREE MORNING PAPERS WEDNESDAY, DEC. 14, FRONT-PAGED COVERAGE OF LT.GEN. MCAULIFFE'S DEC. 13 PRESS CONFERENCE WITH PRO-GOVERNMENT EL PAIS CARRYING BANNER HEADING: "PENTAGON PRESSURE ON URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES CAUSES DEEP ILL FEELING" AND SUBHEADED: "MILITARY CHIEFS ABSENT FROM U.S. GENERAL'S RECEPTION." THE FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE ALSO CARRIED A FIVE-COLUMN COLOR PHOTO OF MCAULIFFE. EL PAIS ALSO QUOTED REPORTS PUBLISHED IN TUESDAY EDITION OF ITS AFTERNOON PAPER, MUNDO COLOR. THE LEADING MONTEVIDEO DAILY ALSO PUBLISHED, ON PAGE 5, EXTENSIVE EXCERPTS TAKEN FROM THE PRESS CONFERENCE UNDER THREE-COLUMN HEADING: "MCAULIFFE: WE HAVE TALKED AS REAL FRIENDS."

3. NATIONALISTIC, PRO-MILITARY LA MANANA CARRIED A FOUR-COLUMN HEADING: "MCAULIFFE: STATEMENTS PROBABLY CAUSED ILL FEELING" UNDER A TWO-COLUMN PHOTO OF THE GENERAL. LA MANA LED OFF ITS STORY WITH REFERENCE TO MCAULIFFE'S REMARKS AT THE NAVAL CLUB LUNCHEON DECEMBER 12 AND FOLLOWED WITH PUBLICATION OF MCAULIFFE STATEMENT AT PRESS CONFERENCE AND SHORT SYNOPSIS OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

4. ON ITS EDITORIAL PAGE, LA MANA PUBLISHED A BLISTERING COMMENTARY ON THE MCAULIFFE VISIT UNDER THE HEADING, "A COARSE INSULT?" FOLLOWING SIX LONG CONFIDENTIAL

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PARAGRAPHS CRITICIZING U.S. POLICIES TOWARD URUGUAY, LA MANANA CONCLUDES ITS COMMENTARY WITH THE RHETORICAL QUESTION THAT PERHAPS "WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT THE PRESUMED ATTITUDE OF LT.GEN. MCAULIFFE IS SIMPLY THE PRODUCT OF CONFUSION OR AN UNFOUNDED PRESS REPORT. OTHERWISE, IT WOULD BE DEPLORABLE TO SEE IN THIS EPISODE ANOTHER GROSS IMPROVISATION CAPABLE OF TARNISHING THAT 'LONG FRIENDSHIP AND CLOSE TIES' WHICH AS THE HIGH MILITARY VISITOR SAID--UNITE URUGUAY AND THE UNITED STATES 'FOR MORE THAN 160 YEARS' "

5. PRESTIGIOUS INDEPENDENT EL DIA, ON THE OTHER HAND, PLAYED UP ONLY THE PRESS CONFERENCE UNDER A FOUR-COLUMN HEADING, "HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. MILITARY AGREE WITH CARTER." EL DIA ALSO CARRIED A TWO-COLUMN PHOTO OF MCAULIFFE, INTERESTINGLY, ALONGSIDE AN AFP REPORT FROM BUENOS AIRES UNDER THE TWO-COLUMN HEADING, "AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ARGENTINA." EL DIA ALSO PUBLISHED, ON PAGE 8, THE FULL TEXT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

6. NATIONALISTIC, PRO-MILITARY EL DIARIO, DECEMBER 13,

GAVE STRAIGHT FORWARD COVERAGE OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE
WITH A DETAILED REPORT, ON ITS EDITORIAL PAGE,
UNDER A FIVE-COLUMN HEADING, "MCAULIFFE: 'I HOPE
RELATIONS BETWEEN URUGUAY AND THE U.S. WILL IMPROVE.' "

7. TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS
HEAVY WITH CHANNEL 10 AIRING ABOUT TEN MINUTES ON
THE 8:00 EVENING NEWSCAST WHILE CHANNEL 4 CARRIED
ABOUT FIVE MINUTES OF MCAULIFFE'S PREPARED STATEMENT
AND SELECTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

8. RADIO COVERAGE WAS LIKEWISE HEAVY WITH CX-14
EL ESPECTADOR BROADCASTING EXTENSIVE PORTIONS OF
THE PRESS CONFERENCE ON ITS 1:00 P.M. NEWSCAST WHICH
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IS LINKED UP ON A NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF FORTY INTERIOR
STATIONS. SEVEN OTHER MONTEVIDEO STATIONS ALSO
COVERED THE PRESS CONFERENCE AND DEVOTED EXTENSIVE
AIRTIME TO THE STORY DURING THEIR AFTERNOON AND
EVENING NEWSCASTS.

9. AFTERNOON OF DEC. 14, NUMDO COLOR PUBLISHED ANOTHER
DISTORTED REPORT, IN A PAGE 2 ARTICLE HEADED,
"MCAULIFFE: NOBODY WENT TO HIS RECEPTION," TOGETHER
WITH A PICTURE CAPTIONED, "AMBASSADOR PEZZULLO: A
RECEPTION WITH FEW GUESTS." THE REPORT STATED
THAT THE RECEPTION STOPPED AND HAD TO BE CALLED
OF FIFTEEN MINUTES AFTER IT HAD BEGUN BECAUSE,
IT SAID, "NOT A SINGLE MILITARY NOR CIVILIAN IN
THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT ATTENDED." END UNCLASSIFIED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MONTEVIDEO 5700

USIA FOR ILA, IOP/M

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10. I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER ROVIRA DEC. 14 TO REGISTER MY CONCERN ABOUT THE DISTORTIONS OF WHAT OCCURRED WHICH THE PRESS ATTRIBUTED TO OFFICIAL SOURCES. I ASKED THAT THE GOU ISSUE A CLARIFICATION. INASMUCH AS HE HAD ATTENDED THE LUNCHEON, I OBSERVED THAT HE KNEW THAT GENERAL MCAULIFFE HAD SAID NOTHING WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED, AS CHARGED IN THE PRESS, AS "A PENTAGON DESIRE TO MANIPULATE THE URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES." I THEN HANDED HIM A COPY OF MCAULIFFE'S TOAST WHICH HE READ VERY CAREFULLY, OBVIOUSLY SEARCHING FOR THE ALLEGEDLY INSULTING LANGUAGE. AFTER READING IT TWICE, HE ADMITTED THAT THERE WAS NOTHING UNTOWARD ABOUT WHAT THE GENERAL HAD SAID BUT REMARKED THAT PERHAPS THE MILITARY WERE UPSET BY THE PARAGRAPH WHICH STATES, "IT WOULD BE A GREAT HELP IF I COULD COMMUNICATE TO THE JOINT CHIEFS IN WASHINGTON EVIDENCE
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OF ACHIVEMENTS THAT YOU HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT TO PROTECT INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS." ON REFLECTION, ROVIRA THOUGHT THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE SHOULD HANDLE THE MATTER INASMUCH AS HE HOSTED THE LUNCHEON. BUT HE OFFERED TO BE "OF HELP IN ANY WAY." HE DOWNPLAYED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INCIDENT AS "A TYPICAL CASE OF PRESS IRRESPONSIBILITY." QUITE CLEARLY HE DOES NOT WANT TO GET INVOLVED WITH WHAT IS CLEARLY A MILITARY-INSPIRED NEWS STORY.

11. I THEN CALLED DEFMIN RAVENNA AND TOLD HIM THAT I THOUGHT THE GOU SHOULD PUBLISH A CLARIFICATION OF THE MISLEADING PRESS STORIES. HE ADMITTED THAT IT WAS VERY UNFORTUNATE THAT SO MUCH ATTENTION WAS BEING GIVEN TO THE AFFAIR. I SAID I WAS LESS CONCERNED ABOUT THE ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO THE VISIT THAN TO THE MISLEADING AND DISTORTED REPORTING OF WHAT OCCURRED AT THE MONDAY LUNCHEON. I ASKED IF HE COULD ARRANGE A MEETING WITH THE CINCS TO DISCUSS THE MATTER. HE SAID HE WAS MEETING WITH THE CINCS THAT EVENING AND WOULD RAISE THE

SUBJECT AND CALL ME THE NEXT MORNING. I SUGGESTED TWO ALTERNATIVES: 1) THAT THE GOVERNMENT ISSUE THE TEXT OF THE MCAULIFFE STATEMENT WHICH SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. (THIS IS THE PREFERRED COURSE.) OR 2) IF THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR SOME REASON, THAT THE EMBASSY ISSUE THE STATEMENT TO THE PRESS. HE SAID HE WOULD BRING MY VIEWS TO THE ATTENTION OF THE CINCS AND GET BACK TO ME.

12. COMMENT. WE HAVE INFORMATION THAT THIS PRESS CAMPAIGN IS DIRECTED BY SOME YET UNIDENTIFIED ELEMENTS WITHIN THE MILITARY. THE DCM HAD A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE AS I DID WITH ROVIRA WHEN HE SHOWED A COPY OF THE GENERAL'S REMARKS TO MINISTER OF ECONOMY ARISMENDI. THE MINISTER, WHO DID NOT ATTEND THE LUNCHEON AND THEREFORE HAD DISTORTED PRESS VERSIONS TO GO ON, COMMENTED UPON READING THE REMARKS "THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING CONFIDENTIAL

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IN HERE THAT COULD BE INTERPRETED AS AN ATTEMPT TO MANIPULATE OUR MILITARY."
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13. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS EVENING OF DECEMBER 14, GENERAL VADORA SAID, "THESE ARE STORIES THAT THE PRESS HAS MANIPULATED IN WHICH WE ARE NOT ABLE IN ANY WAY TO INVOLVE OURSELVES. GENERAL PALADINI IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION CONCERNING WHETHER MCAULIFFE WAS ATTEMPTING TO MANIPULATE THE ARMED FORCES, REPLIED, "ABSOLUTELY NOT. THERE IS NOTHING LIKE THAT. WHAT THE AMERICAN GENERAL HAS SAID WILL NOT AFFECT IN ANY WAY THE URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES." THESE STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED OFFICIALLY BY THE GOU INFORMATION OFFICE.
END UNCLASSIFIED
PEZZULLO

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 15-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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